



Natural Resources Conservation Service

News in South Carolina

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Perdita S. Belk

(803) 765-5402

perdita.belk@sc.usda.gov

POWER for Wildlife Enhances Wildlife Habitat

Columbia, SC (October 15, 1999)--A statewide program designed to enhance wildlife habitat beneath electrical transmission and distribution lines is helping landowners protect wildlife. Thirty-seven partnering companies, agencies, and groups have agreed to support the POWER (Protecting Our Wildlife at Every Right-of-Way) for Wildlife Program which is funded by power companies and electric cooperatives in South Carolina. The program offers cash grants and professional wildlife management assistance to groups and individuals committed to five years of rights-of-way management. Based on a similar program in Georgia, South Carolina's POWER for Wildlife program will enhance wildlife habitat while ensuring the safe and efficient delivery of electricity.

Grant recipients have a 5-year minimum obligation to follow wildlife practices outlined in a management plan which will be developed by the landowner with assistance from specialists from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), and others. Wildlife management practices include mechanical or chemical brush control, permanent and annual wildlife plantings, and management of native vegetation. Recipients can receive \$60 per acre up to a maximum of \$1,000 over a 5-year period. Rights-of-way acres must be routinely managed to prevent unwanted woody growth that

(more)

could interfere with the normal delivery of electricity.

USDA-NRCS State Conservationist Mark W. Berkland praises the program for its environmental incentives. “POWER for Wildlife is an excellent example of how conservation techniques can be used in conjunction with today’s technologically advanced world,” he remarked. “Wildlife plantings and brush control will enhance habitat for deer, quail, songbirds and other animals.”

Landowners, hunting clubs, wildlife organizations, and other individuals committed to the conversion and management of power rights-of-way in South Carolina may apply for a grant. All applications will be ranked and reviewed on a competitive basis. If you own or have a lease history on eligible lands and want to apply for a grant or would like additional information, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) or NRCS field office.

###

